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THE GOOD APPEARANCE OF THE FARMSTEAD SHOULD BE THE
FARM FAMILY'S PRIDE

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A radio talk by Dalton Ozanne, 4-H club boy, Kenosha County, Wisconsin, delivered in the 4-H club program, National Farm and Home Hour, Saturday, March 3, 1934, and broadcast by a network of 58 associate NBC radio stations.

It is a pleasure for me to talk on this subject for in my closing years of club work my Home Grounds Beautification project probably gave me more joy than any of my others. Even now that I am away from home, I receive dividends on my efforts through mother's letters. In nearly all of the correspondence that I receive from home she mentions some new pleasure she has gained through the flowers, shrubs and the rock garden which was my pleasure to build and plant in our home dooryard. She writes me that when she is worried or tired she will go out to the garden where she soon becomes refreshed and rested. If this is true with my mother, are there not hundreds of others who might enjoy these blessings of nature which can be had by most anyone at a minimum of cost and effort? Despite the financial distress in rural America today I can see no substantial reason why we as citizens should not do our part in improving or at least retaining the attractiveness of our farm homes and their surroundings.

While driving along the public highways of today we often ask ourselves - Why are so many farmsteads so untidy and carelessly kept? Is it because the farmer is kept too busy and hasn't time to spend in repairing his farm buildings and beautifying his home grounds? Or is it the lack of money that keeps the farm homes in such a disorderly condition?

We all know that the manager of the farm is usually the father who must devote practically his entire time to getting a livelihood for his family, and so he hasn't much time to spend in beautifying the home. But I feel that it is not necessary for him to do this work, for boys and girls in the 4-H clubs are capable of planning and carrying on this improvement program and would be delighted to do so if given the opportunity.

Large amounts of money are not essential to make the home surroundings attractive. Furthermore the youth of today should be trained and urged to take pride and interest in their own homes to make them livable and attractive. In many cases the natural wild shrubs and trees can be used and by buying or collecting seeds, and starting them in a cold frame or hot bed, many of the expensive plants can be gotten at a very low cost. Such unsightly things as discarded farm machinery, accumulated piles of rubbish, broken window glasses, loose doors and boards can be removed or repaired at such little cost and effort that it seems inexcusable not to have it done.

The entire improvement program need not be done in one year, but can be carried on in several seasons. Even after the proposed plans - and everyone should have a plan - are completed there will be some replacements and changes to make from time to time. Besides there is a constant care of the plants, shrubs and lawn and this very fact will help to bring about a greater interest in the project and thereby in the home itself, and after all isn't it in the home that we are most interested - and the place where we really live. We all know that a bare unkept yard gives the home that unhappy atmosphere which has a greater effect on our lives than most of us realize. That is nicer than to

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be able to linger through a cool shaded garden with the fragrance of the flowers, the songs of the birds, and that enchanted feeling which seems to be present only when you are close to nature and at peace with all the world?

Perhaps the most important advantage in having a beautiful home is its effect on the young people who thereby are more content to live at home and take delight in bringing their friends into this joyous atmosphere.

So radio friends, I am a great enthusiast for beautifying the farm home and surroundings and I urge parents to allow their older boys and girls to take on this responsibility and may I say to you club members that I know of no 4-H project that will give you more immediate pleasure nor a longer or fonder remembrance of the old homestead.

May I add a word of personal experience - that in my work I found the bulletins of the State Colleges and the U. S. Department of Agriculture of very great help. They contain excellent ideas and plans so explained as to be easily understood. The building of bird shelters for winter feeding and bird houses are nicely explained in official bulletins and I think we'll all agree that the birds add much to the home surroundings.

Club members, it may mean that we must give up an occasional ball game or trip to the movies, but boys and girls, just try it and I'm sure you will feel well repaid for your work by the pleasure you get out of having a real beautiful home. Here you can do something that will be the pride of the whole farm family.

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